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INTERIOR  
WASHINGTON  
10/25/2017

DAILY COMMUNICATIONS REPORT

TO: White House Cabinet Affairs Communications  
FROM: Department of the Interior Communications Team  
SUBJECT: Communications Update

**Press Inquiries:**

- Small inquiries and logistical inquiries.
- **\*\*Multiple Inquiries\*\* (Whitefish Energy Company) --REQUEST--** Would someone from Secretary Zinke's office call me to discuss Whitefish Energy. Here are my questions: 1) Did Sec. Zinke play any role in securing the contract for Whitefish Energy to work in Puerto Rico? 2) Does Sec. Zinke know the company's chief executive, Andy Techmanski? 3) The Washington Post reported that one of Sec. Zinke's sons once worked a summer job at one of the company's construction sites. Is that correct? Also, confirming this statement provided to the Post: "The Secretary always politely listens when citizens and the small business community approach him with concerns and ideas. Neither the Secretary nor anyone in his office have taken any meetings or action on behalf of this company." **RESPONSE--** On background, Neither the Secretary nor anyone in his office have taken any meetings or action on behalf of this company. The Zinkes and the Techmanskis know each other because they both live in a small town (population 6,000) where everyone knows everyone and his son joined a friend who worked a summer job at one of their construction sites.
- **\*\*Multiple Inquiries\*\* (Strategic Plan leak) REQUEST** I noticed today that a [link](#) to a Jan. 12 memo directing BLM's consideration of greenhouse gas emissions and the effects of climate change in NEPA reviews is now broken. Is this a temporary or permanent removal? It is a relocation of the memo? Any information you can offer would be greatly appreciated. Is BLM moving closer to announcing the changes it has in store for planning and NEPA procedures? **RESPONSE** The administration does not comment on leaked memos.
- **\*\*Multiple Inquiries\*\*:** **REQUEST--** Following up on the AP story saying admin does not support delta tunnels in California. Would love to confirm and talk with someone? **RESPONSE--** "While the Department of the Interior shares the goals of the state of California to deliver water with more certainty, eliminating risks to the California water supply, and improving the environment, at this time, the Department under the current state proposal does not expect to participate in the construction or funding of the CA Water Fix. The Department and Reclamation will continue to work with the state and stakeholders as the project is further developed."
- **Politico: (Esther Whieldon) REQUEST--** What topic(s) are Zinke and Trump meeting on this Friday? And any sense of timing on a final WH decision/announcement on monuments? Is there anything you can tell us on what the meeting is about so we can give some insight in our morning newsletter? **RESPONSE--** The

Department doesn't discuss meetings that may or may not be held with the President of the United States.

### **Top Stories**

- **Washington Examiner:** Sierra Club begins stirring up trouble for Ryan Zinke over Whitefish's Puerto Rico power contract
- **CNN:** You may have to pay \$70 to visit the Grand Canyon and 16 other national parks
- **Salt Lake Tribune:** Majority of Utahns favors trimming Bears Ears, but most oppose breaking up Grand Staircase, poll says
- **E&E News:** Email release aims to thwart sage grouse collusion claims
- **Denver Post:** Lawmakers seek probe of \$300 million power contract awarded to small company based in Zinke's hometown
- **THE HILL-Opinion:** Western voices are ignored in Zinke's Interior Department

### **Top Issues and Accomplishments**

- Interior continues to support all Hurricane Harvey, Hurricane Irma, Hurricane Maria, and Hurricane Nate efforts. All bureaus are executing their emergency plans and assisting in Hurricane relief.
- Today, Interior announced our Energy Burdens Report on regulation roll back. The press release can be seen [HERE](#).
- Today, Interior and the Bureau of Land Management announced an oil and gas lease sale in Alaska at the National Petroleum Reserve. The release can be seen [HERE](#).
- Tomorrow, Interior will host a “Hunting and Fishing Access for Veterans” Round Table Meeting to improve coordination with and services for veterans. The event will be covered by press.
- Friday, the Secretary will meet with POTUS.
- Next week, Secretary Zinke is out on personal leave.

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Alex Hinson

Deputy Press Secretary  
Department of the Interior

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